

Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)

Information about the form and tips for Wisconsin clerks who receive an FPCA from a voter

What is the Federal Post Card Application (FPCA)?

The FPCA is a federal form that is provided to Military and Overseas voters (permanent and temporary) by the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP). FPCA forms are made available to voters through the various branches of the U.S. military, through U.S. embassies, or online at www.FVAP.gov/election-materials. The FPCA form can serve as both a voter registration application as well as an absentee ballot request for most Wisconsin voters. The form was designed for use by all 50 states, so some of the information does not perfectly match the Wisconsin-specific forms.

What does the FPCA look like?

You can find the FPCA online at www.FVAP.gov/election-materials.

Who can use the FPCA?

The FPCA can serve as a voter registration and/or an absentee ballot request depending on the type of voter using the form:

Military Voters- Military voters may use the FPCA as both a voter registration and/or an absentee ballot request. They indicate their voter status in Box 1 of the form by checking either “I am a member of the Uniformed Services...,” or “I am an eligible spouse...”. Military voters do not need to register to vote in Wisconsin. They may send their FPCA by mail, email, or fax. No Photo ID, no proof of residence, and no signature are required. Military voters may receive their absentee ballot by mail, email, fax, or online.

Permanently Overseas Voters- Permanently Overseas voters may use the FPCA in Wisconsin as both a voter registration application and/or an absentee ballot request. They indicate their voter status in Box 1 of the form by checking, “I am a U.S. citizen residing outside the United States, and my return is not certain” or “I am a U.S. citizen and have never resided in the United States.” Permanently overseas voters must be registered and therefore must submit their FPCA by mail, postmarked no later than the 20th day before the election, with a signature if they are using it to register. No Proof of Residence is needed when using the form as a registration application. An original signature is required when using as a registration application. If a Permanently Overseas voter is already registered to vote in Wisconsin and is using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request only, then they may submit the FPCA by mail, email, or fax. No Photo ID is required when requesting an absentee ballot. No signature is required when the voter is using the form as an absentee ballot request. Permanently Overseas voters are only eligible to vote in federal contests. Permanent Overseas voters may receive their ballot by mail, email, fax, or online.

Temporarily Overseas Voters- Temporarily Overseas voters may use the FPCA in Wisconsin as both a voter registration application and/or an absentee ballot request. They indicate their voter status in Box 1 of the form by checking, “I am a U.S. citizen residing outside of the United States, and I intend to return.” Temporarily Overseas voters must be registered to request an absentee ballot. Proof of Residence is needed when registering using the FPCA. An original signature is required when using as a registration application. When using the FPCA as a registration, the voter must submit the form by mail, postmarked at least 20 days before the election. If a Temporarily Overseas voter is already registered to vote in Wisconsin and is using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request only, then they may submit the FPCA by mail, email, or fax. A copy of an acceptable photo ID IS required when requesting an absentee ballot, unless the clerk already has a photo ID on file for the voter. No signature is required when the voter is using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request only. Temporarily Overseas voters may receive their absentee ballot by mail, email or fax.

Regular/Domestic Voters- Regular/domestic voters may use the FPCA in Wisconsin as both a voter registration application

and/or an absentee ballot request. Regular voters indicate their status by not selecting any of the options in Box 1 of the form. Regular voters must be registered to request an absentee ballot. Proof of Residence is needed when registering using the FPCA. An original signature is required when using as a registration application. When using the FPCA as a registration application, the voter must submit the form by mail or delivery. If a Regular voter is already registered to vote in Wisconsin and is using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request only, then they may submit the FPCA by mail, email, or fax. A copy of an acceptable Photo ID is required when requesting an absentee ballot, unless the clerk already has a photo ID on file for the voter. No signature is required when the voter is using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request only. Regular voters may receive their absentee ballot by mail, email, or fax.

What should I look for on the FPCA?

The FPCA may arrive in a military mailing envelope or it may come to you in a regular envelope. Please open the envelope as soon as you receive it, you have 1 business day to process the request. When looking at the FPCA, please note the information in the following boxes:

Box 1- This section of the form determines the voter type (see above) and will determine how the voter is able to use the form. This form also provides a place for the voter's name (and previous name, if applicable). It also asks for a Wisconsin driver's license number, social security number, and date of birth (not required if military voter).

Box 2- The voter will list the last address where they lived for at least 10 days in Wisconsin. This must be completed by all voters.

Box 3- If the voter has a mailing address other than the address in Box 2, they will list it here. Send the ballot to this address, if ballot delivery by mail is requested.

Box 4- These fields provide contact information in case you need to contact the voter or if they have specified fax or email delivery of their ballot.

Box 5- The first field allows a voter to specify their preferred method of ballot delivery – mail, email, online, or fax – if they are using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request. The adjacent field, regarding political party, is not required or collected in Wisconsin. Please disregard anything listed in this box.

Box 6- Nothing is required in this box. Please look for any special instructions the voter may have listed.

Box 7- Affirmation/Signature- If the voter is Permanently Overseas, Temporarily Overseas, or a Regular voter, they must sign and date their request if they are using it as a voter registration application. If the form is being used as an absentee request only, no signature or date is required. A signature/date is never required for military voters. A witness signature is never required on the FPCA.

What are some tips for processing a FPCA request?

- If a Military or Permanently Overseas voter asks to receive their ballot by "Email/Online", contact the voter to see if they would like to receive their ballot by email or online, but do not choose for the voter. If the voter does not respond with their preference within one business day, email the voter their ballot. If the voter did not provide an email address, mail the voter a ballot. If the voter asks to get their ballot online, then point the voter to myvote.wi.gov so that they may initiate their request online. Please do not enter the online absentee application into WisVote for the voter.
- Photo ID is needed only if a Temporarily Overseas or Regular voter is using the FPCA as an absentee request. If the voter has already provided their Photo ID with a previous absentee ballot request, then they do not need to include a copy with their FPCA absentee ballot request.
- Proof of Residence is needed only if a Temporarily Overseas or Regular voter is using the FPCA as a voter registration application.
- If the voter is using the FPCA as an absentee ballot request, it should be considered a calendar year request. Voters need to submit a new request for each calendar year to continue receiving ballots.